

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2309

November 22, 2016

The Honorable Michael Froman
U.S. Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

The Honorable Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ambassador Froman and Secretary Pritzker:

As you continue discussions with your Chinese counterparts during the 2016 Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, I write to urge your close engagement regarding China's policies on poultry and pork imports. As you know, China is currently using sanitary and phytosanitary standards in order to block U.S. poultry products and some U.S. pork products from being exported to China. As a result, U.S. producers have been harmed by the loss of access to this key market. While I believe that sanitary and phytosanitary standards are critical to protecting a nation's food supply, it appears some of China's current restrictions on poultry and pork have a questionable scientific basis and seem to be targeted toward blocking U.S. exports rather than ensuring food safety. For example, China maintains a ban on all U.S. poultry and poultry products dating back to January 2015 due to high pathogenic avian influenza, despite the fact that concerns from the outbreak have long since subsided.

This issue is particularly important to U.S. producers of certain offal and other poultry and pork products that are of limited value in the U.S. market. In some cases, these products may be highly valued by Chinese consumers. Allowing exports of these products would be favorable for both U.S. producers, who currently earn little from these products, and for Chinese consumers, who could get a product they value - potentially at lower prices.

I commend your recent efforts with your Chinese counterparts to begin to lift restrictions on exports of U.S. beef to China. U.S. producers and Chinese consumers will be well-served by the lifting of those beef restrictions, and I urge you to continue your engagement with a similar dialogue regarding pork and poultry.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter, and appreciate your engagement on this issue.

Sincerely,



Al Franken
U.S. Senator